

Paradoxical New Directions: The simultaneous rise of individualism and plurality

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The rise of feminist criticism rose because of new trends:

- Russian Formalism: they adapted Saussure's notion of langue and parole and valued form and technique.
- New Criticism: valued only the elements within the text and applied close reading as the only form of analysis (de-contextualized).
- Myth Criticism: applied rising anthropological views to look at “universal” tropes and archetypes that were repeated across literature (greeks).

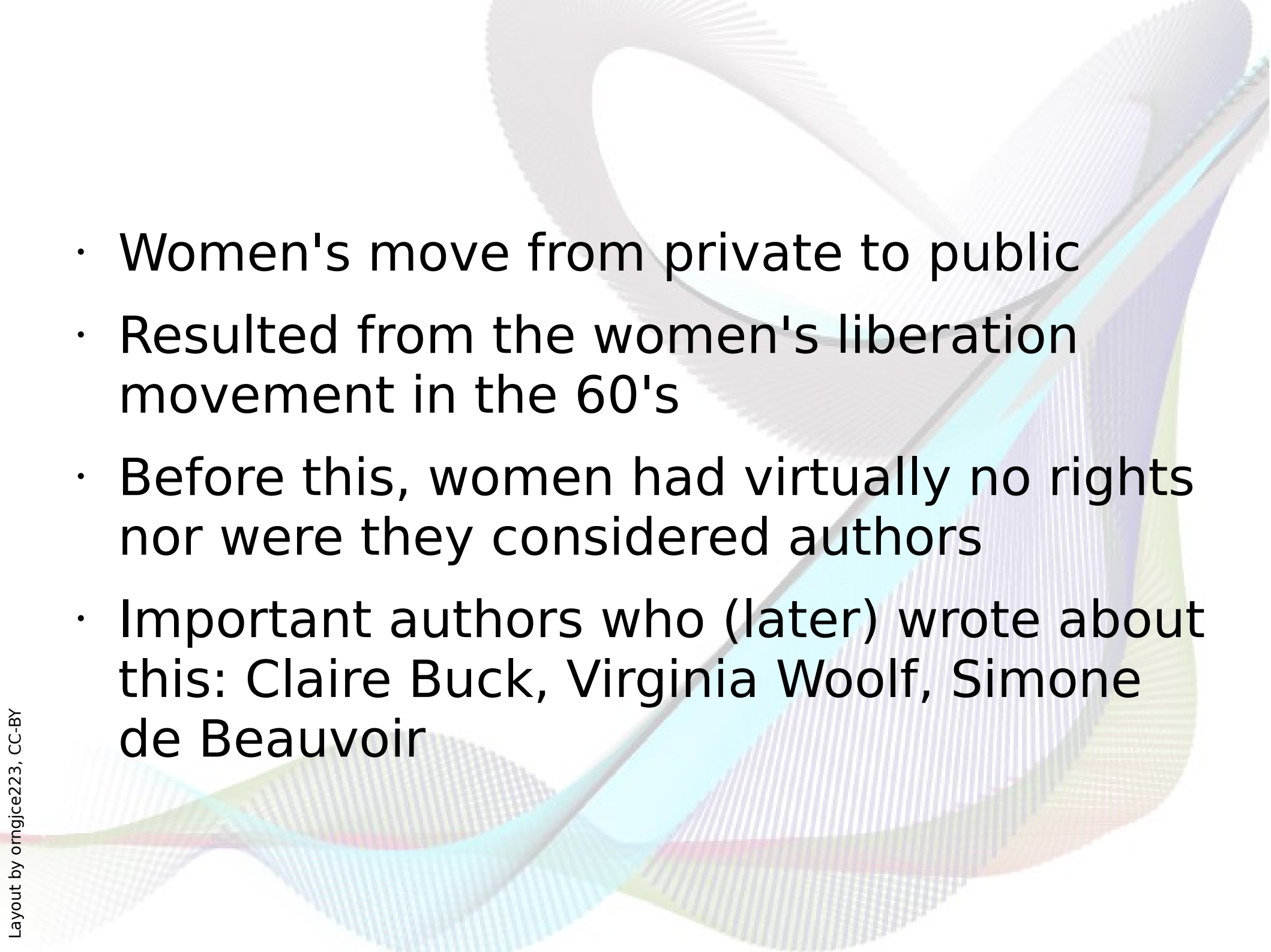
- This posed a problem. All myths and tropes could not be universal (because that would mean that there was no individual difference between cultures). → Jung's collective unconscious / Campbell's Individual Myth → 19th century depicted society and its flaws / 20th century depicted the individual → Freud centered on the individual / Jung studied the individual and the collective

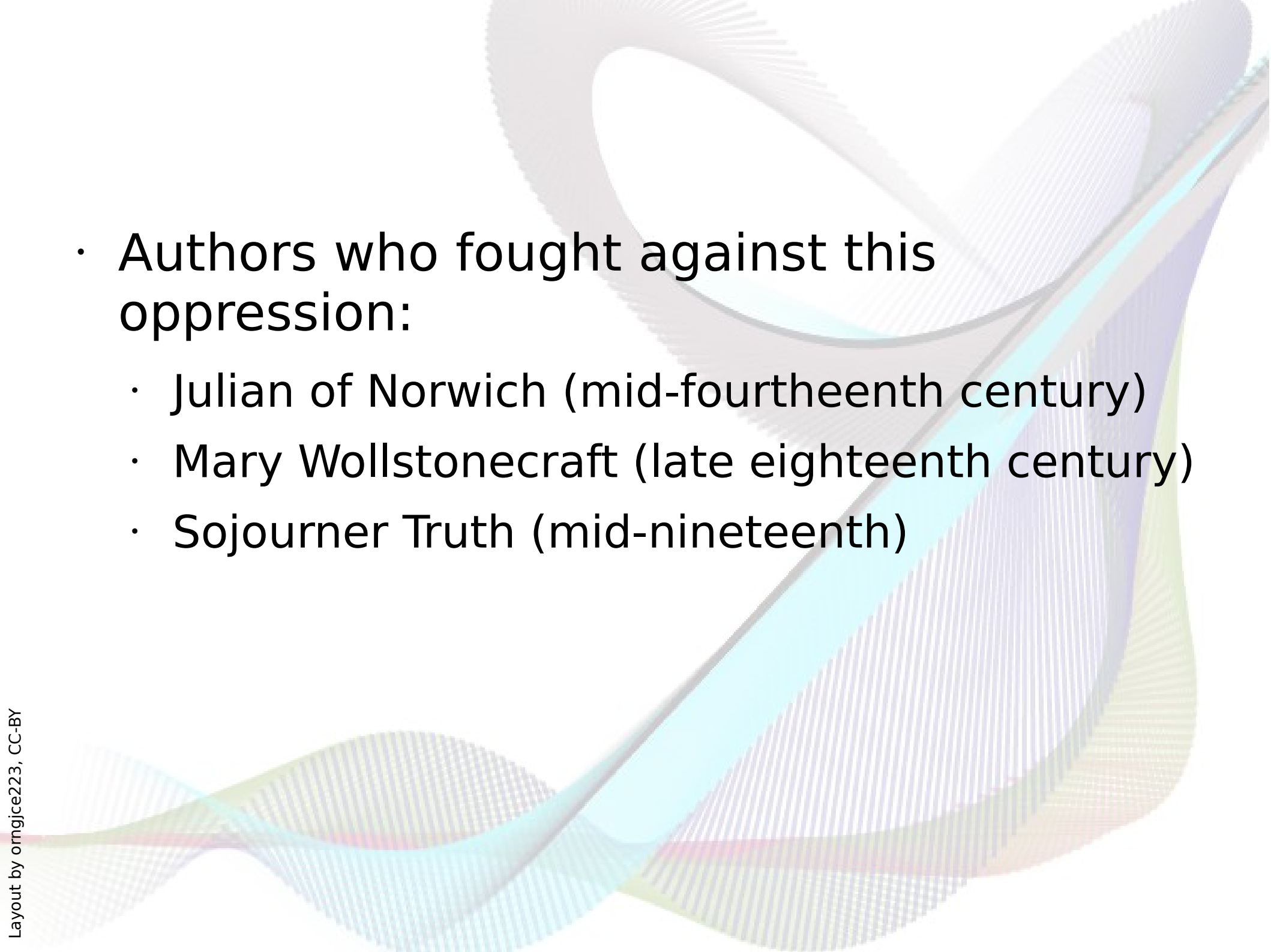
- The 20th century originated the context for the rise of feminism as a true movement:
 - The 1920's were a time of economic crisis
 - Post World War II years and its consequences
 - The 60's and the Hippie movement / Vietnam
 - Religions and tradition were questioned
 - Lit in this period manifested strong social critique
 - The silenced voices of the past could finally speak up

- Reader-Response: allowed for open interpretations. There is no one correct interpretation to a text.
- Structuralism: Saussure's *langue* and *parole*. A system and its elements and how they work.
- Post-Structuralism: Derridá and his idea to deconstruct. Texts have no real order, you can interpret them by finding contradictions inside them.



Changing Voices, Changing Spaces

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- Women's move from private to public
 - Resulted from the women's liberation movement in the 60's
 - Before this, women had virtually no rights nor were they considered authors
 - Important authors who (later) wrote about this: Claire Buck, Virginia Woolf, Simone de Beauvoir

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- Authors who fought against this oppression:
 - Julian of Norwich (mid-fourteenth century)
 - Mary Wollstonecraft (late eighteenth century)
 - Sojourner Truth (mid-nineteenth)



Early Voices and Visions

The waves of feminism

- First wave: 18th and 19th centuries, fought for women to get rights and for causes they deemed moral
- Second wave: Women Liberation Movement, 1960s (the personal is political)
- Third wave: the present, variables and inclusiveness (in all senses). Minorities take their stance and express their voices and stories

- Some advocate against calling the field “feminism” and ask to call it “gender studies”
- The term “feminist” is often mistaken for “man hater”
- As an approach, feminism is often combined with other approaches to literature and other theories in its applications and analyses